

"YOU CAN FOOL SOME
OF THE PEOPLE ALL THE
TIME..."

DRAWER 6A

SPURIOUS QUOTATIONS

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Abraham Lincoln Quotations & Sayings

Spurious

“You Can Fool Some of the
People All of the Time...”

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection



**You can fool all the people some
of the time and some of the people
all the time, but you can't fool all
the people all the time!**

ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

"The Cleveland Plain Dealer," after trying for some time to answer inquirers regarding the occasion of Abraham Lincoln's use of the words, "You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but not all the people all the time," gives it up. Colonel Hay was appealed to, but that biographer of President Lincoln had to acknowledge he never encountered the sentence when making minute investigation of Lincoln's speeches, papers, letters and recorded sayings. An Ohio Congressman who had been asked the question referred the inquirer to the Library of Congress, where, if anywhere, the information could be obtained. "The Washington Post" reports the result. Assistant Librarian Spofford made a written reply, in which he says the sentence does not occur in any of Lincoln's writings, adding that Mr. Nicolay, Lincoln's secretary and associate of Colonel John Hay in writing the elaborate biography of Lincoln, told Spofford the alleged Lincoln saying was spurious. Librarian Spofford says the real author of the popular sentence was Phineas T. Barnum, the famous showman, who "fooled the people" more successfully than any other man of his time.

"I am afraid you are one of those people who look down on toll."

"Not at all," answered the luxurious youth. "My great-great-grandfather worked hard and invested his money, and we are quite pleased with him for doing so."—(Washington Star.

N.Y. Tribune Jan 30, 1905

Speculating on Lincoln's "Fooling the People"

By the Late William E. Curtis,

In the Washington Star, May 8th, 1905

THE inquiry made several times whether anybody knew the time and place that President Lincoln uttered the famous epigram so often attributed to him—"It is true that you can fool all of the people some of the time, and some of the people all of the time; but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time"—has brought out some interesting information.

Miss Helen Nicolay, daughter of the late John G. Nicolay, President Lincoln's private secretary and biographer, says that her father, when questioned, as he was frequently, told all inquirers that he did not believe Mr. Lincoln was the author of the epigram—at least, that he never heard it quoted or attributed to him while he was alive. Mr. Nicolay was convinced that P. T. Barnum was the author.

A. R. Spofford of the Library of Congress, who is the highest authority on all such subjects, says: "The passage quoted about 'fooling the people' is not found in any of the authentic writings of Abraham Lincoln, and his biographers believe it to be spurious."

James T. Smith, who held a position in one of the executive departments in Washington ever since the civil war, says that the late Justice Carter of the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia told him that Mr. Lincoln made the remark at the White House to a delegation of citizens from Ohio, who were being introduced by him (Carter) when he was a member of Congress in the early days of the war. The subject of the conversation was the arguments used by the advocates of peace in the north in favor of stopping the war.

E. P. Swetting of Algoma, Iowa, says: "The remark appears on page 184 of a book entitled 'Lincoln's Yarns and Stories,' published by Henry Neil in 1901. In a conversation with a caller at the White House Mr. Lincoln is alleged to have said: 'If you once forfeit the confidence of your fellow citizens you can never regain their respect and esteem. It is true that you can fool all of the people, etc.'"

Judge George W. Burnell of Oshkosh, Wis., calls attention to an address delivered before the Wisconsin Commandery of the Loyal Legion in 1896 by Col. E. A. Calkins, a veteran Chicago editor, which may be found in Vol. III, page 10, of "War Papers," Wisconsin Com. O. L. L. It is entitled "Humor of Abraham Lincoln," and in it Col. Calkins states that Lincoln was not the author of the famous phrase, but that it appears in one of P. T. Barnum's speeches.

Not in Barnum's Writings

There are several volumes containing autobiographies, speeches, maxims and other acts and utterances of Mr. Barnum, but the phrase in question does not appear in any of them. There are many other epigrams, maxims and bits of philosophy developed from his extraordinary experiences and keen knowledge of human nature. Mr. Barnum was fond of making sententious remarks, and it is singular that he did not include that epigram among the rest of his sayings, if he was really its author. Indeed, the fact that it does not appear in any of his books is convincing evidence against the theory of Colonel Calkins.

The correspondent of the Toledo Blade at Bellevue, Ohio, quotes T. H. Hirst of that city as saying that he heard Mr. Lincoln use the words, "You can fool some of the people all of the time and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time," in a speech. Mr. Hirst says:

"In 1858 I was a resident at Atlanta, Ill., twenty miles south of Bloomington. Mr. Lincoln spoke in Harvey Turner's grove at Atlanta on July 4, 1858, and used the words referred to the same day.

"Sylvester Strong, now buried in Atlanta, Ill., gave Lincoln a cane which he (Strong) had cut at the Tippecanoe battle ground. The cane contained enough knots to spell Lincoln's name. In each knot was inserted a silver letter. The cane was sold several months ago

for \$280, I think. Sylvester Strong of Atlanta was Lincoln's most intimate friend. The same day Lincoln gave me a 50-cent piece, coined in 1858, which I still have in my possession."

Mr. Morgan's Recollections

Richard P. Morgan, a well-known civil engineer of Dwight, Ill., whose reputation is familiar to many public men throughout the country, says that he also heard Mr. Lincoln use the same expression in a speech and confirms the recollection of the late Judge Lawrence Weldon of the Court of Claims that he used it not only once, but frequently, in his political addresses. Mr. Morgan gives me some interesting reminiscences of his relations with Mr. Lincoln, with whom he became acquainted in Bloomington in 1853, when he was division engineer building the Chicago and Alton railroad. Bloomington was then a village of 1,200 people, crowded with emigrants, land buyers, railway contractors and laborers.

"Being somewhat permanently located," he says, "I was fortunate

the first floor of my boarding house, to which circumstance I am indebted for my acquaintance with Mr. Lincoln." On a hot afternoon, I think in the autumn season, I was seated in my room with the door partly open to the main hall. I very readily overheard the following conversation:

"Indeed, Mrs. Hawks, if you cannot accommodate me I am sure I do not know what I shall do. I am here for this term of the circuit court, and have tried everywhere to find accommodations, but so far have failed, and I see no probability of success unless you can care for me."

"Mrs. Hawks replied: 'Mr. Lincoln, I would like very much to give you a room and board while you are in the city, but I have no room or even a bed to offer you, but if it will help you any to come here for your meals I will do the best I can for you.'

"Well," said Mr. Lincoln, "you are very kind, but I have nowhere to lay my head."

Acquaintance With Lincoln

"Those being early days of western life, of which I had seen something, I stepped to the hall door and for the first time saw the tall man of destiny. I said to Mrs. Hawks, 'Is this gentleman a friend of yours?' To which she replied by introducing him as 'Mr. Lincoln of Springfield, a lawyer who is practicing in the circuit court of McLean county. He is a friend of mine, and I am very sorry indeed that I am unable to accommodate him.' After looking at Mr. Lincoln a moment and he at me, with a rather inquiring expression, I said, 'Mrs. Hawks, if you will put a bed in my room, which is too large for one person in these crowded times, I would be pleased to have Mr. Lincoln room with me during his stay in the city.' As I finished this remark Lincoln threw back his head a little, and with it the long, black hair that came over his forehead, and said, 'Now, that is what I call clever.' I thus became the roommate of the greatest man since Washington, the peer of any man in love of liberty, justice and mercy, and I wish to record here that during the time of his stay, several weeks, I learned from him many things which have been of priceless value to me.

"Although his time was very much engrossed by court proceedings, he seemed to strive, although I was twenty years his junior, to make his companionship interesting and serviceable to me. I was told by him of many things and stories of the earlier settlers in Illinois and also he recited selections of poetry, one of them being the poem, 'Why should the spirit of mortal be proud,' etc., of which he was very fond, more so, I think, than he would have been had he been its author."

Other Reminiscences

"On the adjournment of the circuit court Mr. Lincoln returned to Springfield, after which I only met him incidentally when visiting Springfield, until the following autumn, when I became the superintendent of the Chicago and Mississippi railway, soon after which I

engaged the services of Mr. Lincoln as attorney and counselor for the company, and thereafter had frequent business intercourse with him. At the time of my appointment as superintendent Hamilton Spencer came to Bloomington as the acting vice president of the company, and my remembrance is that, having recited to him my acquaintance with Mr. Lincoln, I was directed by Mr. Spencer to engage his services. It is not necessary for me to speak of his then acknowledged ability at the bar, but to illustrate his touch of humor and knowledge of human nature, which was ever present in him, I quote a letter which I received from him inclosing an expired annual pass for 1855 and requesting its renewal, which was due to him as counsel for the company:

"Springfield, February 13, 1856. R. P. Morgan, Esq.:—Says Tom to John, 'Here's your old rotten wheelbarrow. I've broke it usin' on it. I wish you would mend it, 'case I shall want to borrow it this afternoon.' Acting on this as a precedent, I say, 'Here's your old 'chalked hat,' I wish you would take it and send me a new one, 'case I shall want to use it the 1st of March.' Yours truly, A. Lincoln."

"I have always understood that this letter was written to me more as an acquaintance and friend than in my official capacity. The expression 'chalked hat' was at that era, in railroading at least, quite generally used in connection with persons who were fortunate enough to possess annual passes, and when they were called upon by the conductors the holders would say, 'I have a chalked hat,' or, in brief, 'I chalk.'"

Heard the Famous Program

"It was in the summer of the year that I received this letter, 1856, that I stood next to Mr. Lincoln and heard him say: 'You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time.' He was addressing an assemblage of about three or four hundred people from the raised platform of the entrance to the Pike House in Bloomington, Ill., upon the subject of the Kansas-Nebraska act, and reviewing the arguments of Douglas in support of it. His application of his epigram was so apt and forcible that I have never forgotten it, and I believe that no verbal modification of it would be accurate. In his final peroration of that address, referring again to the arguments favoring the Kansas-Nebraska act, he said, with wonderful energy and earnestness: 'Surely, surely, my friends, you cannot be deceived by such sophistries.'"

"The fact that my friend, Judge Lawrence Weldon of the Court of Claims, recalls in substance that Lincoln made use of his epigram in 1858, about the time of Lincoln's joint debate with Douglas," said Mr. Morgan, "indicates clearly to my mind that it was made applicable in other speeches by Mr. Lincoln. Judge Weldon was chairman of the De Witt county delegation to the republican state convention held at Decatur, Ill., May 9 and

out as the 'rail candidate.' I had the honor of being the chairman of the Livingston county delegation to that convention, and recall the patriotic manifestations on that occasion with great vividness, Mr. Lincoln being present."

Where Does Federal Council Of Churches Get Authority?

The pastor of a New England Presbyterian church writes:

"The editorial paragraph headed 'There's Need for More Democracy Here!' in your issue of March 10th, is as true as it is timely and pertinent. The Presbytery of which I am a member, presented a unanimous overture or petition to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, in Des Moines, last spring, praying that our denomination might withdraw from affiliation with the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, on the ground that the council's oft-reiterated claim to represent 30,000,000 Protestant Christians in such questions as the mandate for Armenia, League of Nations and various labor problems is absolutely and preposterously false; and that in fact the council does not know, and has no means of discovering, the views and opinion of the members of our churches upon these matters. Our churches are constantly bombarded with appeals from the council to prepare and present to government officials and to our members of Congress signed petitions in favor of this, that or the other scheme of internationalism."

Cannot Find Lincoln Said It.

Cleveland Plain-Dealer: Within the last few days several inquiries by letter and telephone have been received at this office as to the speech or writing of Abraham Lincoln in which he used these famous words:

"You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but not all the people all the time."

It was with regret and some surprise it was found the answer had to be that careful search failed to find it anywhere with better authority than "as Lincoln said," but where or when he said it was left a mystery. It seems the inquiry was wide-spread, and in every case proved futile. Col. Hay was appealed to, but that biographer of President Lincoln had to acknowledge he never encountered the sentence when making minute investigation of Lincoln's speeches, papers, letters and recorded sayings. An Ohio congressman who had been asked the question, referred the inquiry to the library of congress, where, if anywhere, the information could be obtained.

The Washington Post reports the result. Assistant Librarian Spofford made a written reply, in which he says the sentence does not occur in any of Lincoln's writings, adding that Mr. Nicolay, Lincoln's secretary and associate of Col. John Hay in writing the elaborate biography of Lincoln, told Spofford the alleged Lincoln saying was spurious. Librarian Spofford says the real author of the popular sentence was Phineas T. Barnum, the famous showman, who "fooled the people" more successfully than any other man of his time.

In spite of this authoritative statement, it is probable campaign orators will continue to assert that, "as Lincoln said, 'You can fool all the people,'" etc.

G. Hoffman: Q. Was Abraham Lincoln the author of the saying, "You can fool the people sometimes, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time"? If not, who was?

A. In none of the biographies of Lincoln, is this saying attributed to him. It has on what appears to be authentic evidence been referred to the great showman, P. T. Barnum.

FOR YEARS Abraham Lincoln was credited with the epigram "You can fool some of the people all the time and all the people some of the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time." Not long ago some one demanded authority for the claim that Mr. Lincoln used these words, and investigation disclosed that the authority was not readily found. It was then claimed by those denying that Mr. Lincoln uttered this epigram that it really came from P. T. Barnum, the famous showman. But now comes William E. Curtis of the Chicago Record-Herald and says that William Pitt Kellogg, now a resident of Washington, remembers distinctly hearing Mr. Lincoln deliver this epigram at a meeting held at Bloomington, Ill., in May, 1856. Mr. Kellogg says that Mr. Lincoln used this phrase frequently in his speeches, but he remembers particularly the Bloomington occasion.



MR. KELLOGG says that in this Bloomington speech Mr. Lincoln referred to the position taken by Mr. Douglas that slavery in the territories could be controlled by what Mr. Douglas called "unfriendly legislation." According to Mr. Kellogg, Mr. Lincoln said: "No one can long be deceived by such sophistries. You can fool some of the people all the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time."

Herbert W. Horwill, well known as a contributor of the Transcript, writes this

Not Lincoln,

but Barnum

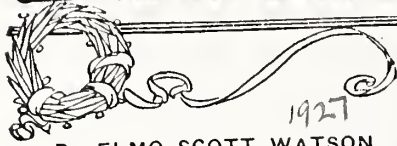
disappointing letter to the Spectator: Sir: In your article on "The Elections So Far" in last week's Spectator you refer to "Abraham Lincoln's great principle, that though you may fool some of the people all the time, and all the people some of the time, you cannot fool all the people all the time." In the interests of accuracy it may be worth while to point out that there is no ground whatever for the popular attribution of this maxim to Lincoln. Its authorship was investigated a few years ago by Mr. Spofford, the assistant librarian of Congress, who could find no trace of it in any of the great President's speeches, papers, letters, or recorded sayings. Neither Mr. Hay nor Mr. Nicolay, the joint authors of the standard biography of Lincoln, knew anything about it. Mr. Spofford's inquiries led him to the conclusion that the originator of this much-quoted sentence was Mr. Phineas T. Barnum, whose qualifications for generalizing on such a subject everyone must recognize. I am, sir, etc.

LINCOLN SAYING

"IF YOU once forfeit the confidence of your fellow citizens," Lincoln said to a caller at the White House, "you can never regain their respect and esteem. It is true that you may fool all the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all the time; but you can't fool all of the people all the time."

Public Administrator 2/4/20

"Did He Really Say It?"



By ELMO SCOTT WATSON



ONE of the favorite beliefs of the American people — probably because of the subtle flattery of their intelligence which it implies—is that Lincoln once said, "You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time." Although some persons confuse this quotation with P. T. Barnum's "the people like to be fooled," probably ninety-nine out of every hundred who have occasion to quote this epigram believe implicitly that the words are Lincoln's.

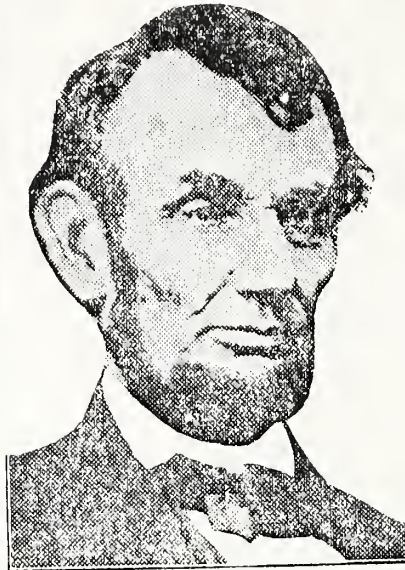
But did Lincoln ever really say it? Rev. W. E. Barton, probably the best-informed man on the life of Lincoln today, whose investigations gave to the world last year the truth about Lincoln's famous Bixby letter, recently set out to learn the truth about the "fool the people" quotation, which is said to have been uttered at Clinton, Ill., between the second and third joint debates with Douglas. His conclusion in the matter, as given in an article in a recent issue of the Dearborn Independent, is incorporated in the following statement:

To my mind the strongest negative argument is not that so few people remember hearing Lincoln say those words, but that, if he really said them at Clinton when Douglas was not present, he did not repeat so apt a phrase in one or more of the five remaining joint debates. He missed five excellent opportunities to use effectively an undeniably pat expression.

Nevertheless I incline to the belief that Lincoln actually used those words

and at Clinton. The evidence is far from conclusive, but it is not lacking in probability. It sounds like Lincoln, and the occasion alleged is one in which the words might appropriately have been used.

But if Lincoln never spoke this clever apothegm, then it would almost seem possible to fool all the people all the time; for all the people, virtually, believe these words to have been Lincoln's.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN

"You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time."

DID LINCOLN SAY IT?

Few popular sayings have achieved more fame or survived more repetition than that attributed to Lincoln which begins "You can fool some of the people all of the time." Governor Roosevelt quoted from it in a statement recently published. It cropped up the other day in a Senate debate on the Kellogg Peace Treaty. The authenticity of it is commonly accepted. Yet nowhere does it appear in any of Lincoln's letters, speeches or public documents.

Nicolay and his collaborator, John Hay, tried in vain to run it down. If the late Mr. Beveridge found proof of it in his extraordinarily minute researches into all the sources of information bearing upon Lincoln he kept the secret to himself. More than twenty years ago this newspaper and the Chicago Tribune together attempted to establish its authenticity. One result was the volunteered testimony of several elderly people who were quite sure they had heard Lincoln express the idea of the epigram, if not in the precise words now employed. This testimony was interesting but not by any means conclusive.

In a note appended to the report of Lincoln's speech delivered at Clinton, Illinois, on December 8, 1858, Hay and Nicolay, with full knowledge of what *The Eagle* and the Chicago Tribune had attempted, observed that the question of authenticity "has been widely discussed and still remains unsettled." The only existing report of the Clinton speech was long ago recovered from the files of a single newspaper, the Bloomington Pantagraph. The report—admittedly an incomplete one—makes no mention of the saying.

Doubt as to the historical accuracy of a good saying never yet discouraged those who desire to repeat it. "You can fool some of the people all of the time, etc." sounds as much like Lincoln as the equally unauthenticated passage concerning the inventor and "the better mousetrap" sounds like Emerson, and the world is quite willing to let them both go at that.

Proof That Lincoln

Weighed His Words

The boxes upon boxes of Abraham Lincoln's papers now safely stored away in the Congressional library at Washington are said to bear evidence that the emancipator sought solitude for his thoughts as he walked. Although these papers have been closed to further perusal for 20 years, a few men were privileged to view them just before the death of Robert Todd Lincoln, his son. The papers show Lincoln's method, the development of his ideas, and the fact that his most famous addresses were rephrased and rewritten sometimes four or five times.

The solitude on his hikes gave him the ideas for his famed addresses. He would stop in his walk and reach in his coat pocket for note paper. If he found none, he would take an envelope from one of his letters, tear the ends open and turn it inside out. On this he would write his idea. If he continued walking, perhaps a second envelope and sometimes a third would be used. Then, back at his desk the notation was pasted at the top of a sheet of foolscap. Beneath it he developed his idea. Hundreds of foolscap notes with such pieces of envelopes attached are among his papers. Sometimes he made as high as five revisions of the original development of his idea.

Something from Lincoln's works is read in both houses of congress on his birthday and a member of each house delivers an address on Lincoln.

Lincoln's coffin was opened in 1902 at Springfield, Ill., the coffin then sealed and bedded in solid concrete, never again to be exposed. This was done with the consent of Robert T. Lincoln, before being sealed under the Lincoln monument, to set at rest the rumors that the ashes had been carried away by ghouls.

Robert T. Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln's only surviving son, passed away in 1926, aged 82, leaving his widow, two daughters and three grandchildren.

Nancy Hanks Lincoln, mother of Abraham, died when he was only 9.

Sally Bush Johnston Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln's step-mother, was wholly illiterate.

Lincoln's birthday was first publicly observed in 1887.

In 1860, Lincoln's life was summed up as follows: farm laborer; salesman; merchant; soldier; surveyor; captain in Black Hawk war; admitted to bar in 1836; member of legislature, 1834-1842; member of congress, 1847-1849; joint discussions with Stephen A. Douglas, 1858.

In the Lincoln Memorial at Washington: "In this temple, as in the hearts of the people for whom he saved the Union, the memory of Abraham Lincoln is enshrined forever."

In 1858, Lincoln was a Springfield lawyer of hardly more than local reputation. It was the Lincoln-Douglas debate, in this year, which made his name known over the country.

Not Original With Lincoln

The saying, "You cannot fool all of the people, all of the time" is commonly attributed to Abraham Lincoln and also to P. T. Barnum, though it is not in their biographies. A little book published by A. Wessels company in 1903, "The Wisdom of Abraham Lincoln," gives this as a quotation from Lincoln's speech at Clinton, Ill., on September 8, 1858. It is quite likely that this was a proverb or popular saying long before he uttered it. A book of old English proverbs lists a similar saying: "No one is a fool always; every one sometimes."

WEST WARWICK (R.I.) TIMES
SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 1929

CAVERNE, OK.; LEADER-TRIBUNE.
FEB. 21, 1930 M4

(1897) to Zeppelin (1900), all of whom
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WHERE DID LINCOLN SAY IT?

Compiled by HERBERT WELLS FAY, Custodian Lincoln's Tomb

Continually somebody asks a question about Lincoln and to give authoritative replies. It often takes hours of research, which demonstrates the need of a Lincoln concordance or compiled index of Lincolniana. Students constantly ask "When did he say that?" and "When did he say this?" Even collectors and students of Lincoln when asked for proof are often forced to spend hours in research.

If some man of wealth deserving a monument that would be more lasting than fied rock in an obscure cemetery would become convinced of this great need, he might sponsor a deal to publish a set of books that would be to the student of Lincoln what a standard concordance is to a student of the Bible. Such a work would find a place as the first items of the Lincoln section of every library, newspaper, magazine, school and Lincoln collection anywhere.

Such an undertaking would require no elaborate research for new material, as an excuse for publication. Secure the services of a trained student of modern historical research and under his direction a bevy of competent stenographers and have them make carbon copies of every line of Lincoln matter especially covering every idea, telling where found, etc. These duplicate slips may be filed alphabetically under each idea word of the quotation.

Then to make it more complete solicit custodians of Lincoln shrines, authors, librarians, and teachers to submit a list of the questions asked that the answers may be included. In cases of dispute over material points, the evidence of each side may be given.

The above was suggested by the general thousand questions asked the writer and particularly by two submitted recently. The first called for a brief history of Lincoln's father. We found that we had to consult about twenty books and many interviews to get the data we published

in the Week By Week, Nov. 17, 1934.

The other is as follows:

State Board, Vocational Education.

Madison, Wis., Nov. 13, 1934.

Herbert W. Fay, Custodian Lincoln's Tomb.

My dear Mr. Fay: I have often wanted to locate the following quotation alleged to have come from Lincoln:

"You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time."

Is Lincoln responsible for the above quotation, and if so at what time and on what occasion did he say it?

I will greatly appreciate hearing from you in this connection.

With kind regards and best wishes, believe me,

Sincerely yours,

Geo. P. Hambrecht.

Prof. Hambrecht has for years been a systematic collector of Lincoln data, and has speaking engagements in many states on patriotic occasions. The proposed accumulation index of Lincoln would have served him as quickly, as dispute in spelling would be settled by Webster's dictionary.


The question had been asked before and we had remembered that witnesses had claimed that Lincoln had used it in his Clinton speech of 1858.

From the Nicolay and Hay Complete Works we find:

Lincoln spoke for an hour and a half at Clinton, Ill., and the Bloomington Pantagraph of the next day gave the most complete account, and while it contains about 1,800 words, it made no reference to "fooling people." The paper regrets that it can give only a brief synopsis of the address.

The Pantagraph account is published in the Complete Works, 1905, Vol. 3, Page 349, and as a partial answer to Prof. Hambrecht's inquiry we call attention to

the foot note in which the statement is made that the Chicago Tribune and the Brooklyn Eagle, in 1905, had instituted a search to locate the quotation. They found witnesses who testified that they had heard Lincoln use it in his speech at Clinton, Ill., Sept. 8, 1858. The witnesses were as follows: Lewis Campbell of De-witt County, Ill.; J. J. Robinson, Lincoln, Ill., and J. L. Hill, Fletcher, Ohio.

A painting of George Washington, likely by Howard Chandler Christy, showing him in a white military-style coat with a laurel wreath draped over his shoulders. He is looking slightly to the right. In the background, the dome of the United States Capitol building is visible under a blue sky. The painting is on a dark, possibly black, background.

For 18 years it has been true: "MORE PEOPLE RIDE ON

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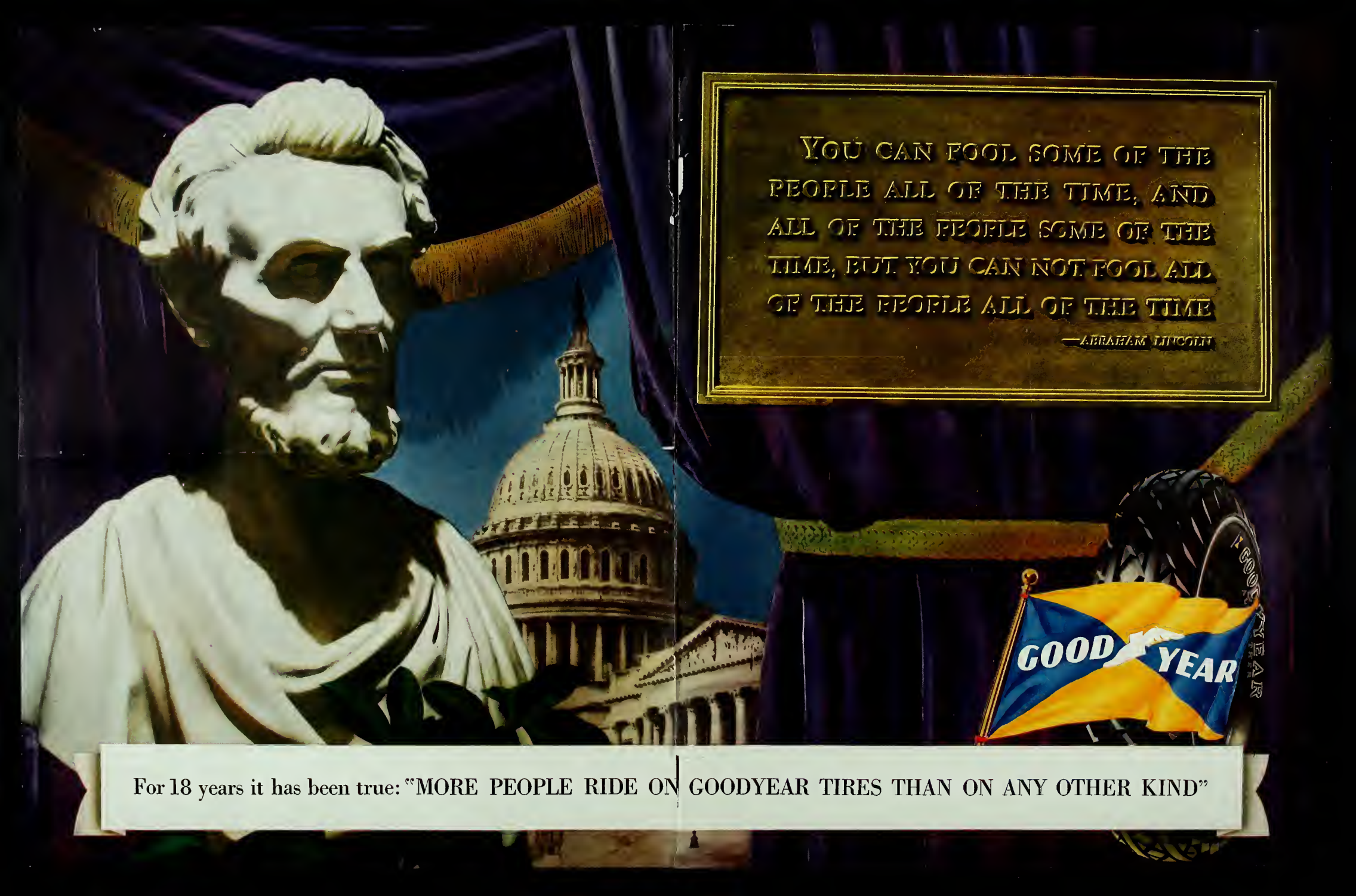
The question had been asked before and we had remembered that witnesses had claimed that Lincoln had used it in his Clinton speech of 1858.

From the Nicolay and Hay Complete Works we find:

Lincoln spoke for an hour and a half at Clinton, Ill., and the Bloomington Pantagraph of the next day gave the most complete account, and while it contains about 1,800 words, it made no reference to "fooling people." The paper regrets that it can give only a brief synopsis of the address.

The Pantagraph account is published in the Complete Works, 1905, Vol. 3, Page 349, and as a partial answer to Prof. Hambrecht's inquiry we call attention to

the foot note in which the statement is made that the Chicago Tribune and the Brooklyn Eagle, in 1905, had instituted a search to locate the quotation. They found witnesses who testified that they had heard Lincoln use it in his speech at Clinton, Ill., Sept. 8, 1858. The witnesses were as follows: Lewis Campbell of De-witt County, Ill.; J. J. Robinson, Lincoln, Ill., and J. L. Hill, Fletcher, Ohio.



YOU CAN FOOL SOME OF THE
PEOPLE ALL OF THE TIME, AND
ALL OF THE PEOPLE SOME OF THE
TIME, BUT YOU CAN NOT FOOL ALL
OF THE PEOPLE ALL OF THE TIME

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN

For 18 years it has been true: "MORE PEOPLE RIDE ON GOODYEAR TIRES THAN ON ANY OTHER KIND"

Continually sought about Lincoln and applies. It often takes which demonstration of Lincoln concordance Lincolnonia. Still "When did he say he say this?" Friends of Lincoln are often forced to search.

If some man monument that than fixed rock would become need, he might a set of books to identify Lincoln concordance is to a study work would find of the Lincoln newspaper, making collection any

Such an undelaborate research an excuse for services of a historical research a bevy of and have the every line of covering every etc. These do alphabetically the quotation.

Then to me custodians of librarians, and of the question may be included material point may be given

The above thousand questions particularly The first call Lincoln's father to consult all interviews to



You can fool all the people some of the
time, and some of the people all the time,
but you cannot fool all the people all the
time. (Lincoln's speech at Clinton, Ill.,
Sept. 8, 1858. Work, Vol. XII, Page 4.)

~~work by Lincoln~~ 8/27/36

Sunday, May 1, 1933

Here's a letter from George Hambrecht, director of vocational education. You'll remember, perhaps, that some two years ago we had quite a debate about whether it was Abraham Lincoln or P. T. Barnum who used the epigram:

"You can fool some of the people all the time, you can fool all the people some of the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time."

There was quite a debate. Lincoln scholars, and circus fans such as Bill Doudna participated, and the libraries were searched for conclusive evidence. About all that came out of it was perhaps a majority opinion that it sounded more like Barnum than like Lincoln. But no direct quotation by either of them, from high authorities, was found. In his letter, which follows, Mr. Hambrecht has discovered an authority which very definitely credits the saying to Abraham Lincoln:

Hon. A. M. Brayton,

Wisconsin State Journal,
Madison, Wis.

My dear Aaron:

Some four years ago you sent me a letter written you by A. B. Fontaine, of Green Bay, concerning a quotation, "Fooling the People . . . etc." Fontaine believed the quotation should be credited to Barnum. You believed it to be a quotation from Lincoln, and you wrote me concerning the matter. I replied to your letter, giving what appeared to be all the information then available. Most of the Lincoln people believed that the quotation was foreign to Lincoln's nature, and I was inclined to the same belief, notwithstanding the fact that some people maintained that they heard Lincoln use the alleged quotation. None of the Lincoln people could place a quotation of this kind and credit it to Lincoln.

Recently I came across the quotation in "Lincoln's Words and Stories" by Colonel Alexander K. McClure, page 184. McClure was a resident of Pennsylvania and a close personal friend of President Lincoln. He had heard most of the Lincoln stories and he took it upon himself to compile a list of stories which he claimed to be authentic, and published them in book form.

With the setting given by Colonel McClure, it seems altogether probable that Lincoln may have made the statement. According to McClure, Lincoln is alleged to have said to a caller at the White House:

"If you once forfeit the confidence of your fellow citizens you can never regain their respect and esteem. It is true that you may fool all the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all the time; but you can't fool all the people all the time."

With the introductory statement in the McClure story, it is altogether probable that Lincoln is responsible for the entire quotation. I thought you might be interested in this additional information.

With best personal regards, believe me,

Sincerely yours,

GEORGE P. HAMBRECHT.

A. M. Brayton

HIT and MISS

By HAROLD WILLIAMS

JOHN BEACH 12-3-37
 "YOU can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time; but you cannot fool all the people all of the time."

Who said that?

We supposed there was no more question about it than about authorship of the words: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right."

No more question than as to who said: "A house divided against itself cannot stand. I believe this government cannot endure permanently half-slave and half-free."

Nor than the origin of these words: "That this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

We always heard that Abraham Lincoln said: "You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all of the time."

* * * *

THEN somebody told us that P. T. Barnum, and not Lincoln, said it.

Another person thought it was Ben Franklin.

Appeal was made to a book of quotations, which attributed it to Lincoln.

Then a friend gave us a copy of the November 6 issue of Lincoln Lore, bulletin of the Lincoln National Life Foundation, Dr. Louis A. Warren, editor, published by the Lincoln National Life Insurance Company at Fort Wayne, Ind., and in it we read:

"No quotation credited to Abraham Lincoln has been more generally accepted as genuine, yet without documentary support, than the following lines:

"You can fool all the people some of the time.

"And some of the people all of the time.'

"But you cannot fool all the people all of the time.'

"The Brooklyn Daily Eagle in 1905 interviewed many people who claimed to have heard Lincoln repeat the memorable triplet, and, with hardly any exception, the consensus of opinion

was that it was used in an address which Lincoln made at Clinton, Ill., in 1858; yet it is not found in any of Lincoln's printed speeches. One affiant testified that the statement referred to fooling the people on the slavery issue, and recalled the very place it occurred in Lincoln's address."

Lincoln's use of the telling way of describing limits of the people's gullibility appears to be well established, but we are astonished to find, after all these years, that there is any question about it.

The idea that Barnum said it probably is a case of association of ideas. The great showman did say—or so we always have understood—that the American people like to be fooled, and also that a sucker is born every minute. That might have given rise to the notion that Barnum said that "you can fool all the people some of the time," etc.

While looking up Lincoln quotations, we came upon what may have been the origin of one of the most famous of them: "With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right," etc.

In a letter written July 30, 1838, John Quincy Adams said: "In charity to all mankind, bearing no malice or ill will to any human being, and even compassionating those who hold in bondage their fellow men, not knowing what they do."

While Lincoln expanded the thought and applied it to his own particular subject, and said it better, the germ of it is in the sentence written by Adams, who was a pioneer in the anti-slavery movement and whose utterances the young Lincoln may be supposed to have read and pondered.

Shakespeare, it has been remarked, did not trouble to originate, but took old plays and with the magic of his genius gave them immortality. The world does not care where he found his material; it is forever grateful to him for the finished product. It is the same with Lincoln's eloquence and that of other masters of language—if they borrow some of their material, they transmute it to something precious and everlasting.

"You can fool some of the people all
the time, and all the people some of
the time, but you can't fool all the
people all the time."

Did Lincoln say it?

Memorandum by

Edgar J. Rich

Boston, July 1, 1940

DID LINCOLN SAY IT?

Few reputed sayings of Abraham Lincoln have had greater currency than this,

"You can fool some of the people all the time, and all the people some of the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time."

Whether Lincoln was the author of these words has been questioned by some Lincoln scholars. Dr. F. Lauriston Bullard, one of our foremost and most enthusiastic investigators in Lincoln lore, published in the Boston Herald of May 31, 1938, the following letter:

"To the Editor of The Herald:

That familiar saying, 'You can fool all the people part of the time and part of the people all the time, but you can' fool all the people all the time,' has been attributed to Abraham Lincoln. In Clinton, Ill., there is a Lincoln statue, on the pedestal of which the saying is inscribed, with the statement that the words were spoken in an address in Clinton, July 27, 1858, by Abraham Lincoln. The sentiment might perhaps have been pointedly used at that time for those were the days of the contest with Douglas for the senatorship, but the orator on the day the statue was dedicated informed this writer that he had only the memory of a very old man to rely upon.

The same dictum is phrased differently in the recent Home Book of Quotations arranged by Burton Stevenson, thus, 'You can fool some of the people all the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all of the time.' Mr. Stevenson cites a speech at Bloomington, Ill., on May 29, 1856, "On the authority of William P. Kellogg."

Yet the fact remains that diligent search has been made by more than one Lincolnian to prove the correctness of this saying of Lincoln. It has a Lincoln quality, but there is no absolute evidence that he used these words. Years ago there was considerable discussion of their authenticity, but no correspondent came forward with definite evidence. Tradition is not trustworthy and memories are fallible."

Dr. Bullard has recently made further investigations.

He refers to the dedication of a statue of Lincoln at Clinton, Ill.,

on which is the inscription of the "fool the people" remark, and to the dedication address of Judge Lawrence B. Stringer, to whom Dr. Bullard wrote for his authority. He gave that of the local historian who vouches for it upon hearsay, and also of one Captain Hill, a Civil War veteran who stated definitely that he heard Lincoln use the phrase in 1858.

Dr. Bullard refers to an important note in the Gettysburg edition of Lincoln's books, Vol. 3, p. 349, as follows:

"The question has been widely discussed and still remains unsettled, as to whether Lincoln originated the memorable epigram: 'You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time.'

In 1905 the Chicago 'Tribune' and the Brooklyn 'Eagle' combined efforts in an endeavor to solve the enigma for all time. After investigation several witnesses were found, notably Lewis Campbell of Dewitt County, Ill.; J. J. Robinson of Lincoln, Ill.; and J. L. Hill of Fletcher, O., who agreed that Lincoln had expressed the sentiment, if not the exact words generally quoted. It is supposed that he used the phrase in the above speech while addressing the people of Clinton, though the 'Pantagraph' fails to cite it. Naturally, newspaper reports in those days were never complete, and the editor on this particular occasion even apologizes for his lack of space to give the entire report of this speech."

Dr. Bullard further finds that according to the Library of Congress the remark appears in no known writings of Lincoln. He quotes Miss Nicolay as saying that her father was against Lincoln's saying it.

These additional facts as found by Dr. Bullard would tend on the whole to strengthen the belief in Lincoln's authorship. In his investigations he has shown the true historical spirit in citing the pros and cons, and I know he would like to be convinced that this is not another Lincoln myth - and I am in hopes to convince him before I have finished this memorandum.

Dr. Bullard's reference in his Herald letter to "absolute evidence" and "definite evidence" raises at the outset the question as to what is the type of evidence which should be persuasive with the historian. It is clear that there is much evidence, which has probative value with the historian, which could not be introduced in a court of law. A striking example of this is so-called "hearsay testimony". In a criminal trial the government is seeking to deprive the defendant of his life, liberty or property, and the law has thrown around him every possible protection (too much so in fact) in order that his fundamental rights may not be unjustly taken away from him. He has a right to be confronted by his accuser and his witnesses. He has above all the right of cross-examination. Hence hearsay evidence is inadmissible for there is no opportunity to cross-examine the witness who makes the statements. The same rule applies to civil actions where ordinarily the plaintiff attempts to deprive the defendant of his property. There is the further reason for the exclusion of such evidence - a jury of untrained men is unable to weigh properly its probative value.

Neither of these reasons for rejecting hearsay evidence applies to the historian. He is not seeking to deprive any man of his life, liberty or property. (Some times he may seek to besmirch his reputation). It is assumed that he is seeking the truth by means of such evidence as appears to a fair-minded man as carrying conviction. He may, therefore, consider hearsay evidence, but must weigh it carefully. He may totally reject it because of the unreliability of the man quoting the saying or of the man making it. But it is not enough to reject it simply because it is hearsay.

Take for example that delightful book of Judge Elwin L. Page, "Abraham Lincoln in New Hampshire". Is there any doubt that it adds distinctly to our knowledge of Lincoln, although there is scarcely anything which does not rest upon hearsay testimony? Even the illuminating articles from newspapers are hearsay. Judge Page is of course a trained investigator, accustomed to determine the credibility of witnesses and to weigh the value of their testimony. He is also a shrewd judge of human nature. We accept therefore without any question the testimony which he offers in regard to Lincoln's appearance in New Hampshire, the reception he received and the impression he made. That he weighs the testimony carefully is indicated by his rejection of some things which were ~~not true~~. *told him*.

These reasons for accepting the hearsay evidence of Judge Page's book do not apply to the testimony cited by Dr. Bullard, resting upon the memory of a very old man. If this were the only evidence to establish the authenticity of the "fool the people" aphorism it would be pretty flimsy. But it is not the only evidence to be relied upon.

In the first place the statement has, as Dr. Bullard says, the Lincoln quality. In the use of simple words, with only enough words, to convey the meaning, in its pungency of statement, it has the quality of the Hooker letter and the telegram to Horace Greeley. The sentiment is peculiarly Lincolnesque. Who else could have said the same thing in the same way?

Again, the sentiment has had currency for many years, perhaps fifty or more, and no one has claimed that he or any one else was the author. It seems strange that if any one else was

the author that he, or some of his friends, has not come forward and made the claim.

But before calling an important witness I want to refer to an addition to the statement which is cited in Bartlett's Familiar Quotations. On page 457, it is given as follows:

"If you once forfeit the confidence of your fellow citizens you can never regain their respect and esteem; it is true that you may fool all the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all the time; but you can't fool all the people all the time."

What peculiar strength is given to the familiar quotation by the first sentence! How thoroughly in Lincoln character it is!

Bartlett cites in his authority McClure's Lincoln's Own Yarns and Stories, (p. 124). Again hearsay, but stated by a man of great prominence, a journalist and a frequent visitor at the White House during the war. It is fair to conclude that some one told this to Col. McClure, and it would seem incredible that that anonymous person should have made it up out of whole cloth.

And now I come to a piece of evidence which upon the face of it would seem to be hearsay carried pretty far, yet I venture to say that it is entitled to the greatest credence.

In 1936 there was published a remarkable interview with former Governor Joseph W. Fifer of Illinois, then 95 years old. Former Governor Frank O. Lowden had urged the publisher of The Chicago Tribune to send some one to Governor Fifer to take down his reminiscences before it was too late. In his foreword to this

interview, afterwards published in pamphlet form, Governor Lowden said:

"Governor Fifer can give from personal experience a more accurate account of the important events of the last three-quarters of a century than any other man of whom I know."

The Tribune sent James O'Donnell Bennett, one of its ace reporters. Mr. Bennett spent four days with Governor Fifer, who had been practically blind for more than ten years. Mr. Bennett said, "In forty-five years of journalism it was the finest interview I have obtained". He refers to Fifer's remarkable accuracy in quoting poets, authors, statesmen and others, and in giving dates of events, always without referring to any source; to his remarkable clearness of statement and pungency of comment.

Fifer had had a varied and honorable career, a soldier desperately wounded at Vicksburg, after the war graduating from Illinois Wesleyan University, admitted to the bar and becoming city and state's attorney, a state senator, and in 1888 Governor of the State, all his opponents being generals and he a private, hence "Private Joe" Fifer, a shibboleth which probably won him the election. From 1899 to 1906 he was a member of the Interstate Commerce Commission. (At this time I began my practice before the Commission. I remember him as particularly clear-headed and courteous). After retiring from the Commission he resumed the practice of law in Bloomington, Ill.

In the course of his interview by Bennett (p.22 pamphlet "Private Joe" Fifer) is this passage:

"I suppose it is by a saying of Lincoln's which Joseph Fifer put into the world's common coinage of sententiae that he will be longest remembered. This is the story in his own words:

"That remarkable man Milton Hay--and Mr. Lincoln never had a better friend--told me that a saying of Lincoln's which all the world knows now was 'You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time.' In 1894, after my term as governor, I made a speech in Piatt county, this state, in which I repeated what Milt Hay had told me. The speech was printed in the St. Louis Globe Democrat, the Chicago Inter-Ocean and other papers and thus the saying was first given publicity. None of the Lincoln biographers had ever discovered it."

Later (p.25) he makes this reference to Milton Hay,

"But we ought to be a bit chronological--keep things in their order--so first I must tell you about Grant and my dear friend Richard Oglesby in 1861. Oglesby himself told it to me when I was governor. In those days I would invite him to the mansion every time I could, and he and Milton Hay and I would sit up all night talking about Lincoln and Grant. Milt, he'd give out about 2 in the morning and go home, but Oglesby and I would sit it out till cockcrow."

(Fifer was governor in 1888-1892. Milton Hay died September 15, 1893)

To summarize the degree of credibility to be attached to this statement by Fifer:-

1. That Bennett quoted Fifer in the main accurately will probably not be questioned.
2. That Fifer quotes Milton Hay correctly is hardly open to doubt considering Fifer's intimate relations with him and apparently his frequent talks with him, and the accuracy of his memory as vouched for by Bennett.

3. That Martin Hay had every opportunity to talk with Lincoln is shown by the fact that he was at one time in Lincoln's office, and later had his own office in the same building and on the same floor with Lincoln.

Fifer pays this extraordinarily fine tribute to Milton

Hay, p. 40:

"Hay was the uncle of John Hay, secretary of state under both McKinley and Roosevelt. He paid John's expenses at the old college in Springfield and at Brown university. Milt was one of the wisest of men and a great lawyer. He always refused office but he was fitted for any office--not excepting the presidency."

I venture to say therefore that it is established as a historical fact that Lincoln was the author of the expression, "You can fool some of the people all of the time and all the people some of the time, but you can't fool all the people all of the time," and that probably it was prefaced on one occasion at least by the sentence quoted by McClure, a sentence which adds so much to the more frequently quoted remark-

"If you once forfeit the confidence of your fellow citizens you can never regain their respect and esteem; it is true that you may fool all the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time."

LAW OFFICES
OF
EDGAR J. RICH

TELEPHONE
LAFAYETTE 3488

6 BEACON STREET, BOSTON

January 15, 1942

Dr. Louis A. Warren, Editor
Lincoln Lore
Lincoln National Life Foundation
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Dear Dr. Warren:

The annual report card which I have just received prompts me to write you about matters I have had on my mind for some time. I thoroughly enjoy Lincoln Lore and regard it as a very great contribution to Lincolniana. I am amazed at the extent of your research, and I am always impressed by the admirable way in which you present the results of your investigations.

I would like to add something to the brief reference I have made on the stub in reference to my Lincoln collection.

I started some time ago to collect books written by men who knew Lincoln; also autobiographies, reminiscences, etc. of men who knew him and who refer to him in their books; also essays, sermons, statements, etc., by men who knew Lincoln. In other words my purpose has been to gather together as much source material for evaluating Lincoln the man as possible. I have, I think, about 500 items. Goodspeed tells me that so far as he knows it is a unique collection. It has been a fascinating search to collect this material, and it has been found in most unusual places. For instance, recently I picked up in a bookstore the Reminiscences of Sir Henry Holland, Queen Victoria's personal physician, in which I found a delightful account of an interview he had with Lincoln.

There is one item I would like so much to get, but I think it is impossible to secure it, namely, the centenary issue of the Boston Sunday Globe printed, I think, on February 12, 1909, which contains 100 interviews with men who knew or had met or had seen Lincoln. I have the centenary number of the Chicago Tribune which, however, does not compare in interest with the Globe issue.

was the author of

I am sending you herewith a memorandum which I prepared on the question as to whether Lincoln ~~made~~ the saying, "You can fool some of the people, etc.," which was started by reason of a letter written by Dr. F. Lauriston Bullard in which he questioned whether Lincoln ever said this. I understand that you have made quite an investigation and have come to the same conclusion that I have, namely, that Lincoln probably did say this. I doubt, therefore, if there is anything new in my memorandum unless it be the Fifer interview.

Dr. Louis A. Warren

-2-

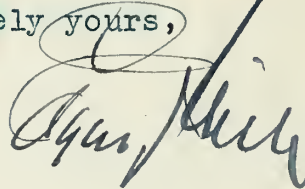
January 15, 1942

You may keep this for your files if you desire and make any use of it you see fit, except that I do not want Dr. Bullard to be brought into it. I have submitted this memorandum to him but, like so many newspaper men, he seems to be unwilling to change his views.

I enclose check for \$2.00 for The Lincoln Kinsman. I have not been aware of this publication. After reading the number I may want to accept the offer for back numbers.

With the warmest appreciation of your fine work, I am

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Edgar Allan Poe", written over the typed name "Edgar Allan Poe". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Encs. 2

"SPEECH AT CLINTON, ILLINOIS, SEPTEMBER 8, 1858

"The question has been widely discussed and still remains unsettled, as to whether Lincoln originated the memorable epigram: "You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time."

"In 1905 the Chicago "Tribune" and the Brooklyn "Eagle" combined efforts in an endeavor to solve the enigma for all time. After investigation several witnesses were found, notable Lewis Campbell of Dewitt County, Ill.; J. J. Robinson of Lincoln, Ill.; and J. L. Hill of Fletcher, O., who agreed that Lincoln had expressed the sentiment, if not the exact words generally quoted. It is supposed that he used the phrase in the above speech while addressing the people of Clinton, though the "Pantagraph" fails to cite it. Naturally, newspaper reports in those days were never complete, and the editor on this particular occasion even apologizes for his lack of space to give the entire report of this speech."

Taken from the "Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln by Nicolay and Hay." Volume III

7

January 19, 1942

Mr. Edgar J. Rich
6 Beacon St.
Boston, Mass.

Dear Mr. Rich:

I am sure that Dr. Warren will be very much interested in reading your letter and manuscript when he returns to Fort Wayne from his annual speaking itinerary.

Enclosed you will please find a copy of Lincoln Lore No. 552 where Dr. Warren does make some mention of the quotation which is the subject of your manuscript.

Yours very truly,

MAC:WM
M.A.Cook
enc.

March 17, 1942

Mr. Edgar J. Rich
6 Beacon Street
Boston, Mass.

My dear Mr. Rich:

Upon my return to Fort Wayne after an extensive speaking itinerary covering over nine weeks I find your letter of January 15 upon my desk.

May I thank you for the very fine and able presentation of the "Fooing The People" controversy. I am in entire agreement with you.

Possibly you may remember that in Lincoln's first speech made on March 9, 1852 in Saugamon County he said with respect to his own ambition "I can say for one that I have no other so great as that of being esteemed of my fellow men by rendering myself worthy of their esteem." This I believe you will note carries the very essence of the preliminary words in your version of the statement as Lincoln originally made it.

We regret sincerely that we cannot supply you with a copy of the Boston Sunday Globe for February 12, 1909. We have a great many of these centennial papers but do not seem to have the Globe issue.

I trust you are going to like the Kinsman. Do regret that some of the back numbers have not been made available to you. I am enclosing one which I think is of special interest which I would like to have you read and I think it will in a measure suggest the approach which we plan to make in discussing the testimonies of several other witnesses who are largely responsible for Lincoln's sources which have been largely drawn upon by those who have written about the Emancipator.

May I thank you again for your very fine contribution to the quotation about fooling the people.

Very truly yours,

LAW:WM

Director

LAW OFFICES
OF
EDGAR J. RICH

TELEPHONE
LAFAYETTE 3488

6 BEACON STREET, BOSTON

March 23, 1942

Dr. Louis A. Warren, Director
Lincoln National Life Foundation
Fort Wayne, Indiana

My dear Mr. Warren:

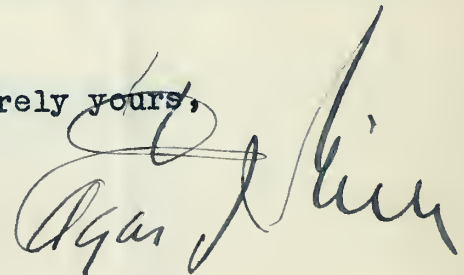
I was pleased to get your letter of March 17, and I am much gratified that you are in agreement with me on the "Fool the People" controversy.

Thank you very much for sending me the copy of the Lincoln Kinsman in reference to the Ann Rutledge myth. Your analysis is thoroughly convincing. I am much annoyed by the high praise given Herndon by men like Beveridge and Henry White. It seems to me that Herndon was simply obsessed with jealousy of Lincoln. He felt that he was a better educated man, a profounder thinker and an abler writer. He, moreover, was greatly disappointed that Lincoln did not give him an important office when Lincoln became president. Although Herndon praises Lincoln, at times he usually gets in some sly dig. He seems more eager to find defects in Lincoln than to recognize his greatness. Under plea of giving facts he sought to disparage Lincoln.

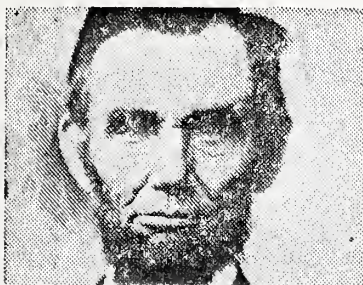
What a wonderful time you must have had on your speaking itinerary. I hope that sometime I can meet you again, and I would like to hear the details of your speaking trip.

With high respect, I am

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Edgar J. Rich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Edgar" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Rich".

Between the lines



In the wake of Watergate and President Nixon's resignation, and amid the heralding of the new White House attitude, some may find it fitting to observe that today is the 116th anniversary of the first utterance of an aphorism that has endured all its political disbelievers. On that long ago Sept. 8, Abraham Lincoln spoke in downstate Clinton and said: "You can fool all of the people some of the time; some of the people all of the time; but not all of the people all of the time."

hens from scratching up the garden, and consisted of a movable brace attached to the hen's legs so that at each scratch the hen was propelled forward, and so by successive scratches all the way out of the garden. The other device was called a "double-back-action hen persuader," which was so adjusted under the hen's nest that as each egg was laid it fell through a trap door out of sight of the author, who would then be persuaded to lay another egg.

David Homer Bates, "L as He Was," *Leslie's Weekly*, 8 (4 February 1809), 106. The hen-walker was in *Harper's Weekly*, 1 (6 June 1857), 366.

267. [From a speech of Richard Price Morgan, Pontiac, Illinois, 12 February 1909:] Speaking of the relative merits of New England rum and corn juice, as he called it, to illuminate the human mind, he told me this story of John Moore, who resided south of Bloomington Grove, and subsequently became state treasurer: Mr. Moore came to Bloomington one Saturday in a cart drawn by a fine pair of red steers. For some reason he was a little late starting home, and besides his brown jug, he otherwise had a good load on. In passing through the grove that night, one wheel of his cart struck a stump or root and threw the pole out of the ring of the yoke. The steers, finding themselves free, ran away, and left John Moore sound asleep in his cart, where he remained all night. Early in the morning, he roused himself, and looking over the side of the cart and around in the woods, he said: "If my name is John Moore, I've lost a pair of steers; if my name ain't John Moore, I've found a cart." After a good laugh together, Lincoln said: "Morgan, if you ever tell this story, you must add that Moore told it on himself."

Isaac N. Phillips, ed., *AL by Some Men Who Knew Him* (1910), pp. 99-100. AL must have been fooling Morgan, for this is a perennial favorite of the jestbooks, from at least 1617 when it appeared in a temperance tract by Thomas Young, *England's Bane: or the Description of Drunkenness*, sig. F2, as about John Lawrence who "being at Windsor, and drunke so hard, that having a Cart and three Horses, he was not able to stand to drive them out of towne, but some of his company helpt him up into the Cart, thinking the horse would bring him home. (But so it chanced he fell a sleepe in the Cart) and the Horse going in the midst of the Forrest, and there stayed feeding, came a good fellow by, and stole away two of the Horse: The Filhorse making after his fellowes, drew the man in the Cart so farre that it was out of his

Zall, Abraham Lincoln Laughing
1982

knowledge where he was: and either by the braying of the horse, or some Jut of the Cart, hee by chance awaked before hee was come to himselfe: (which being) and he seeing but one Horse in the Cart, cried out, Lord, where am I? Or who am I? If I am *John Lawrence*, then have I lost a Cart and three Horses: But if I am not *John Lawrence*, then have I found a Cart and one Horse."

268. [In the same speech, Morgan recalls a day in 1856:] I stood next to Mr. Lincoln and heard him say: "You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time." He was addressing an assemblage of three or four hundred people from the raised platform of the entrance to the Pike House, in Bloomington, upon the subject of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and reviewing the arguments of Douglas in support of it. His application of his epigram was so apt and so forcible that I have never forgotten it, and I believe that no verbal modification of it would be accurate.

Ibid., pp. 102-103. Morgan's emphasis on witnessing the event was necessary because J. G. Nicolay and John Hay, *Complete Works of AL* (1905), 3:349n reported that the combined efforts of the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Brooklyn Eagle* could not discover whether AL had said this oft-quoted remark, printed, for example, in A. K. McClure, ed., "*Abe*" *Lincoln's Yarns & Stories* (1901) as: "It is true that you may fool all the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all the time; but you can't fool all the people all the time" (p. 124). Nathaniel W. Stephenson, *An Autobiography of AL* (1926), p. 159, follows Nicolay and Hay in saying the talk was given at Clinton, Ill., 8 September 1858, but otherwise gives Morgan's version.



Entries 269-270 are from an anonymous article, "The Sad Humorist," *Collier's*, 13 February 1909, p. 16.

269. Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts called at the White House early one morning. He was told that the President was downstairs; that he could go right down. He found the President polishing his boots. Somewhat amazed, Senator Sumner said: "Why, Mr. President, do you black your own boots?" With a vigorous rub of the brush the President replied: "Whose boots did you think I'd black?"

Thomas Lowry, *Personal Reminiscences of AL* (1910), p. 24, says it was Secretary Chase who complains, "Gentlemen don't black their own boots in Washington." AL asks, "Whose boots do they





For the People

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“You Can Fool All of the People” Lincoln Never Said That

By Thomas F. Schwartz

Undoubtedly the most famous utterance ever attributed to Lincoln is, “You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time.” Early recollections place the saying in an 1858 speech Lincoln delivered in Clinton, Illinois. The first appeared in 1904 by E. E. Pierson, who remembered Lewis Campbell, a respected citizen of DeWitt County, telling him of the 1858 speeches that Lincoln and Douglas delivered in Clinton. According to Campbell, Lincoln said, “Judge Douglas cannot fool the people: you may fool people for a time; you can fool a part of the people all the time; but you can’t fool all the people all the time.”¹ The following year, the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Brooklyn Eagle* undertook investigations in an attempt to solve the mystery. Many remembered Lincoln speaking in Clinton but fewer remember his exact words with only a handful indicating that Lincoln uttered something about fooling people. The findings of these newspaper investigations became part of a 1905 revised and expanded edition of Lincoln’s writings originally edited and compiled by John Nicolay and John Hay. A footnote for the Clinton speech entry reads: “The question has been widely discussed and still remains unsettled as to whether Lincoln originated the memorable epigram: ‘You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time.’ In 1905 the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Brooklyn Eagle* combined efforts in an endeavor to solve the enigma for all

time. After investigation several witnesses were found, notably Lewis Campbell of DeWitt County, Ill.; J. J. Robinson of Lincoln, Ill.; and J. L. Hill of Fletcher, O., who agreed that Lincoln had expressed the sentiment, if not the exact words generally quoted. It is supposed that he used the phrase in the above speech while addressing the people of Clinton, though the ‘Pantagraph’ fails to cite it. Naturally, the newspaper reports in those days were never complete, and the editor on this particular occasion even apologizes for his lack of space to give the entire report of this speech.”² Nicolay and Hay remained suspicious of recollected words. Since Nicolay died in 1901 and Hay on July 1, 1905, the inclusion of the note was undertaken by the editor of the revised edition, not Nicolay and Hay. The editor also assigned the incorrect date of September 8, 1858, to the speech.

The Reverend William Eleazer Barton, a prolific author of many books on Lincoln and his family, published regularly in the *Dearborn Independent* on Lincoln topics. His sleuthing uncovered the Pierson recollection and other accounts of the quote by Lincoln’s contemporaries. Barton points out the problems with the recollected testimony but concludes: “The evidence is far from conclusive but it is not lacking in probability. It sounds like Lincoln.”³

Paul Angle, the young executive secretary for the Lincoln Centennial Association, quickly realized the public’s interest in the mysterious Lincoln quote. Among his many responsibilities was to answer research queries about Lincoln utterances. At the top of the list was whether Lincoln uttered the famous words at Clinton. Angle wrote a memorandum outlining his

evaluation of the evidence: “This epigram is almost universally believed to have been coined by Lincoln in a speech at Clinton, Illinois, on September 2, 1858 (usually dated Sept. 8), and many qualified students accept it as indubitably genuine. While it is not printed in the text of the Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln, the editors (or editor?) give it a qualified certification in a footnote to the report of Lincoln’s Clinton speech, and reproduce it without qualification in the anthology which accompanies that compilation. It should be remembered, nevertheless, that there is no contemporary authority for the apothegm. Our only source of information regarding what Lincoln said at Clinton is a summary, avowedly incomplete, which was printed in the *Bloomington Pantagraph* for September 9, 1858. Not until 1905—years after the remark had won a secure place in American folklore—did several men who had heard Lincoln speak at Clinton come forward to assert that on that occasion he had used these words. The recollections of these men, however, differ not only from each other in important particulars, but also vary materially from established facts. Naturally, implicit confidence cannot be placed in their statements. Moreover, several who were present at the Clinton meeting have no recollection of Lincoln’s use of the epigram. Dr. William E. Barton has pointed out (*Dearborn Independent*, Sept. 11, 1926) that if Lincoln actually struck upon such a felicitous expression at Clinton, it is strange that he did not repeat it in any of the five remaining debates, all of which were reported verbatim. The words are Lincolnian in

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"You Can Fool All of the People" Lincoln Never Said That

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character, to be sure, but that fact is hardly a sufficient reason for believing implicitly that Lincoln actually spoke them."

Angle reflected the growing view exemplified in the academy by Professor James Garfield Randall, that to find the "real" Lincoln, evidence must be sorted and evaluated according to accepted canons of historical methodology. Without locating the phrase in a contemporary newspaper account or diary, recollected words many years after the fact were weak pegs to hang the quote upon. While historians in the Lincoln field followed Angle's admonition, popular writers continued to use the phrase. Archer Shaw places the quote in *The Lincoln Encyclopedia* (1950), citing the Nicolay and Hay

reprint as the source without mentioning the qualifications. Roy P. Basler reasserts Paul Angle's position in a footnote to the September 2, 1858, speech contained in *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (1953).

Citing the Bloomington *Pantagraph*, September 3, 1858, as the source for the entry, Basler summarizes the history of the mysterious Lincoln utterance: "Tradition has come to attribute to the Clinton speeches one of Lincoln's most famous utterances—'You can fool all the people some of the time and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all of the time.' In 1905 testimony was gathered by the Chicago *Tribune* and Brooklyn *Eagle* to prove that Lincoln

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Holiday Reading

Lincoln buffs will enjoy the selection of new and interesting offerings on the Sixteenth President. For those who have not read the late William E. Gienapp's biography of Abraham Lincoln, we urge you to do so. David Herbert Donald explores the theme of friendship in *We Are Lincoln Men*. This book was the recent recipient of the New York Lincoln Group's Award of Achievement. Donald E. Markle has edited the diary of David Homer Bates who worked in the War Department's telegraph office. Finally, John A. Corry has published *Lincoln at Cooper Union*, a book that James M. McPherson praises as "a wonderful book that is not only a clear exposition of this important speech but also a fascinating account of how it came about and what its consequences were. This is an important contribution to Lincoln scholarship." Please make your checks out to "IHPA," and Illinois residents must add 7.25 percent sales tax.

William E. Gienapp, *Abraham Lincoln and Civil War America*

Retail: \$26.00 ALA member price: \$20.80

David Herbert Donald, *We Are Lincoln Men: Abraham Lincoln And His Friends*

Retail: \$25.00 ALA member price: \$20.00

Donald E. Markle, ed., *The Telegraph goes to War: The Personal Diary of David Homer Bates, Lincoln's Telegraph Operator*

Retail: \$27.95 ALA member price: \$22.50

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“You Can Fool All of the People” Lincoln Never Said That

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used the epigram at Clinton. The testimony was conflicting and dubious in some particulars, but the epigram has remained a favorite in popular usage. Neither the report in the *Pantagraph* which provides the text of the Clinton speeches, nor any other contemporary Lincoln reference located by the present editors, make any reference to the epigram.⁴

Historians focused attention on the earliest claims traced back to Clinton. Another claim dating a few years later posits that Lincoln uttered the words in 1856 at Bloomington, Illinois. William Pitt Kellogg, an Illinois lawyer, politician, and contemporary of Lincoln, wrote a lengthy recollection of Lincoln. In response to a solicitation from Lincoln Centennial Association secretary James R. B. Van Cleave, Kellogg penned his remarks on February 8, 1909. Kellogg detailed his memories from the 1856 Republican Convention held in Major's Hall where Lincoln delivered what is known as the “Lost Speech.” Kellogg claimed: “I was so fortunate as to occupy a seat well in front, and listened to speech with close attention. When he came forward to speak of course there was much excitement. Mr. Lincoln began very slowly, holding in his left hand a card upon which he had evidently jotted down some of his leading thoughts. From time to time, as he reached some climax in his argument, he would advance to the front of the platform as he spoke, and with a peculiar gesture hurl the point, so to speak, at his audience; then as the audience rose to their feet to cheer, he would walk slowly backward, bowing and glancing at the card he held in his hand, again he would resume his speech, making his points in the same manner and with like effect. I was in this speech, discussing the question of popular sovereignty, and declaring that Douglas's position upon the question of unfriendly legislation was rank sophistry, that Lincoln used the epigram, ‘You can fool all the people some

of the time, you can fool some of the people all the time, but you can't fool all the people all the time.’ It was here also that he made that often quoted declaration, ‘We say to the southern disunionists, we *won't* go out of the Union, and you *shan't*.’”⁵ Kellogg's view was shared by Richard Price Morgan, who worked with the Chicago & Alton Railroad from 1852 until 1857 and founded the town of Dwight, Illinois. Addressing a group in Pontiac, Illinois, on February 12, 1909, Morgan claimed: “It was in the summer of the year that I received this letter—1856—that I stood next to Mr. Lincoln and heard him say: ‘You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time.’ He was addressing an assemblage of about three or four hundred people from the raised platform of the entrance of the Pike House in Bloomington, Ill., upon the subject of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and reviewing the arguments of Douglas in support of it. His application of his epigram was so apt and so forcible that I have never forgotten it, and I believe that no verbal modification of it would be accurate. In his final peroration of that address, referring again to the arguments favoring the Kansas-Nebraska Act, he said, with wonderful energy and earnestness: ‘Surely, surely, my friends, you cannot be deceived by such sophistries.’”⁶ While not in agreement on the exact phraseology, Kellogg and Morgan both seem to think Lincoln uttered the sentiment in a different town at an earlier time. Don and Virginia Fehrenbacher, finding nothing in the record to support Kellogg and Morgan's claims, rate the recollections with a “D” grade.⁷

A final variation was advanced in the 1920s. *Hoyt's New Cyclopedia of Practical Quotations*, revised by Kate Louise Roberts in 1922, attributes the quote to Phineas Taylor Barnum, the great nineteenth-century showman. An entry note in part reads “Attributed to

Lincoln but denied by Spofford.”⁸ Harriet Elizabeth Prescott Spofford was a popular writer of fiction and poetry who wrote for popular magazines such as the *Atlantic Monthly* and *Harper's Bazaar*. Two years following the publication of *Hoyt's*, Mrs. Mida McGillicuddy, described by the International News Service as a “Dallas historian,” repeated the claim that the showman P. T. Barnum actually coined the phrase and Abraham Lincoln merely quoted Barnum in Clinton.⁹ If the epigram is Lincolnian in sentiment, one could equally argue that it is Barnumian: the supporting evidence in both cases is equally tenuous.

¹As cited in William E. Barton, “‘But you Can't Fool All the People All the Time’—Did Lincoln Say It?” *Dearborn Independent*, Sept. 11, 1926, 8, 18.

²John Nicolay and John Hay, eds., *The Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Francis D. Tandy, Co., 1905), 3:349.

³*Ibid.*, 18.

⁴Roy P. Basler et al., eds., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1953), 2:81.

⁵William Pitt Kellogg to James R. B. Van Cleave, Feb. 8, 1909, TS, Henry Horner Lincoln Collection, Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library.

⁶Morgan's recollection is found in Paul Angle, ed., *Abraham Lincoln By Some Men Who Knew Him* (Chicago: Americana House, 1950), 73–74.

⁷Don E. and Virginia Fehrenbacher, eds., *Recollected Words of Abraham Lincoln* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1996), 277, 335–36.

⁸Kate Louise Roberts, *Hoyt's New Cyclopedia of Practical Quotations* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1922), 182.

⁹“Says Epigram Credited To Lincoln Is Barnum's,” *Murphysboro Independent*, Sept. 24, 1924, newspaper clipping, reference files, Henry Horner Lincoln Collection.

Did Lincoln Say It?

To the Editor of The Herald:

That familiar saying, "You can fool all the people part of the time, and part of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time," has long been attributed to Abraham Lincoln. In Clinton, Ill., there is a Lincoln statue, on the pedestal of which the saying is inscribed, with the statement that the words were "spoken in an address in Clinton, July 27, 1858, by Abraham Lincoln." The sentiment might perhaps have been pointedly used at that time for those were the days of the contest with Douglas for the senatorship, but the orator on the day the statue was dedicated informed this writer that he had only the memory of a very old man to rely upon.

The same dictum is phrased differently in the recent Home Book of Quotations arranged by Burton Stevenson, thus: "You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all of the people all the time." Mr. Stevenson cites a speech by Lincoln at Bloomington, Ill., on May 29, 1856, "on the authority of William P. Kellogg."

Yet the fact remains that diligent search has been made by more than one Lincolnian to prove the correctness of the attribution of this saying to Lincoln. It has a Lincoln

quality, but there is no absolute evidence that he used these words. Years ago there was considerable newspaper discussion of their authenticity, but no correspondent came forward with definite evidence. Tradition is not trustworthy and memories are fallible.

F. LAURISTON BULLARD.
Boston.

Lincoln on Fooling the People.

C. S. N., Trenton, Mo.: The quotation you ask about is attributed to Lincoln. "If you once forfeit the confidence of your fellow citizens," he said to a caller at the White House, "you can never regain their respect and esteem. It is true that you may fool all the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all the time; but you can't fool all of the people all the time."



THERE seems to be some dispute as to whether Abraham Lincoln was responsible for the saying that "You can fool all of the people some of the time, etc.," but it is an established fact that he was a conservative man and were he alive and living in this town today, he would add to his conservatism by advising you to open a bank account with

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